U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region 10

Indian Environmental General Assistance Program
FY17 Funding Announcement
(for proposals generally beginning 10/1/16, although start dates may vary)

I.   OVERVIEW

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10, Tribal Trust and Assistance Unit, is announcing the funding opportunity for Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) grant proposals from federally recognized tribal governments and intertribal consortia for work to be completed in FY17. The goal of GAP is to assist tribes in building capacity to administer tribal environmental programs consistent with the federal laws the EPA is charged with implementing, according to their individual needs.

A. IMPORTANT DUE DATES

Action	Due Date
Funding Announcement distributed by EPA Region 10	October 2015
Draft budgets and work plans MUST be postmarked, hand-delivered, submitted in GAP Online, faxed or emailed* to your EPA Project Officer. Applicants submitting work plans for the first year of a multi-year grant cycle must also submit a Narrative Discussion per Section V of this Announcement.	**January 15, 2016** **Late proposals will not be accepted.**
Renew your SAM Registration	EPA recommends renewal of your SAM registration every **February** to avoid a lapse in GAP funding.
NEW! **Register in Grants.gov** If your tribe/organization is not already using Grants.gov, you MUST register in order to apply for funding.	EPA recommends registering **by February.** Registration can take up to a month, so begin the process early.
Consortia resolutions (or other supporting documentation) from all member tribes are due to EPA.	**March 16, 2016**
Full application packages, including budgets, work plans and federal forms must be submitted through Grants.gov. All grant forms can be downloaded at: http://www.Grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/download-application-package.html. Grants.gov application instructions are included in **Attachment A**.	Your Project Officer will assign your due date for submitting your full application package into Grants.gov. All applicants will be assigned due dates on a rolling schedule between March and mid-May. **Your application must be submitted by your assigned date.**
Final work plans and budgets must be entered into GAP Online.	**September 30, 2016**
FY17 GAP awards will be made to tribes and tribal consortia	**September 30, 2016**

*For faxed or emailed work plans/budgets, applicant must obtain confirmation of receipt by an EPA Project Officer.

B.   HIGHLIGHTS

- *NEW!* **All Applicants MUST Register in Grants.gov.** In order to submit your application in Grants.gov, your tribe or organization must be registered with Grants.gov at: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html. The site contains

registration instructions to help you walk through the process. EPA recommends that you download the forms and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. The registration process can take *up to one month.* Begin the process early in order to ensure you are registered by February. Also, you must have a DUNS number and an active SAM.gov registration before registering with Grants.gov.

- *NEW!* **Access and Download the Application Package in Grants.gov**. *After* work plans are negotiated, your Project Officer will direct you to submit your application in Grants.gov. For more details and a list of materials and federal forms that must be submitted, see Section V of this Announcement. To submit your application, go to: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/download-application-package.html.

- *NEW!* **Funding Opportunity Number.** When submitting your application in Grants.gov, you will need to enter the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA) and the Funding Opportunity Number. *There are different numbers for applicants applying for stand-alone GAP grants and for Performance Partnership Grants (PPGs)*:

	CFDA	Funding Opportunity Number	Competition ID
GAP grants	66.926	EPA-CEP-02	N/A (leave blank)
PPGs	66.605	EPA-CEP-01	N/A (leave blank)

- *REMINDER!* **Region 10 Uses a Rolling Schedule for Grant Application Deadlines.** In order to streamline the award process, Region 10 uses a rolling schedule for submitting grant application packages in Grants.gov. As you and your Project Officer negotiate your work plan and budget, a tribal-specific due date between March and mid-May will be established for submitting your application package in Grants.gov. You **must** submit you package in Grants.gov by the tribal-specific deadline established with your Project Officer.

- **Proposal Review Checklist.** Region 10 is providing an optional Proposal Review Checklist (**Attachment B**). This checklist is provided with the intent that you use it prior to the January 15 proposal deadline. The checklist will help you review draft work plans and budgets, and fix any problems before submitting your proposal to EPA. This self-review will reduce the time dedicated to negotiations for both EPA and tribal applicants, and will streamline the review and award process.

- **RTOC-Hosted Tribal Leaders Summit**. The Region 10 Tribal Operations Committee is planning to host a region-wide meeting in FY17, tentatively scheduled for March 2017 in Seattle. If you are interested in attending, include travel to Seattle in your FY17 GAP work plans and budgets.

- **EPA Will Continue to Fund Solid Waste and Source Separation (Recycling) Service Activities under GAP in FY17.** EPA has approved an additional one-year extension to the transition period for unallowable tribal solid waste utility services in GAP awards this funding cycle. As a result, GAP awards for work taking place during FY17 may contain solid waste and recovered resource collection, transportation, backhaul, and disposal services. This decision impacts activities related to the general costs of government services described in Section 1.4 Allowable Activities and Restrictions of the GAP Guidance (page 7 of 22); award decisions relating to such activities will not require AIEO Director approval as described under Section E.4(a) (page 29 of 42). This decision will provide tribes and EPA more time to explore alternative funding strategies.

- **Funding Requests**. EPA invites base GAP funding requests ranging from $75,000 to $128,000, depending on program need and ability to perform stated tasks. Additionally, EPA invites requests up to $30,000 to support the tribal solid waste utility services prohibited under the GAP Guidance. See Section III of this Announcement for specific requirements related to this opportunity.

- ▪ *REMINDER!* **EPA-Tribal Environmental Plans (ETEPs)**. The 2013 GAP Guidance requires each tribal government grantee to negotiate a joint EPA-Tribal Environmental Plan with the Agency. All Tribes must develop an ETEP by FY18 in order to receive GAP funds. Region 10 began working with tribes in FY14 to develop ETEPs. Your EPA Project Officer will work with you to schedule development of your ETEP. See Section V.B.2.

- ▪ *NEW!* **Greener Grants Policy**. Region 10 is piloting a Greener Grants Policy to integrate sustainable practices and climate change considerations into projects funded by EPA. Grantees are encouraged to work with EPA to identify activities that will create more sustainable outcomes and reduce climate impacts. Examples include environmentally preferable purchasing, reducing greenhouse gases, increasing community resiliency to climate impacts, water/energy conservation, resources conservation/green disposal, and green conferences/alternatives to traditional travel. Region 10's Tribal Unit will begin implementing this new policy with grantees that are beginning a new four-year grant in FY17. Project Officers will contact these grantees to talk about how to incorporate greener practices into work plans. Additionally, Region 10 will share information on the web, and will schedule at least two grantee trainings.

II. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

This funding announcement includes the following grant opportunities:
- ▪ GAP Grants to tribes and intertribal consortia
  - o The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number for GAP grants is 66.926.
  - o The Funding Opportunity Number for GAP grants is EPA-CEP-02.
- ▪ Performance Partnership Grants, referenced in Section IX of this Announcement
  - o The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number for PPGs is 66.605.
  - o The Funding Opportunity Number for PPGs is EPA-CEP-01.

GAP is exempt from competition. Therefore, applications that meet the stated requirements in program regulations, guidance and this announcement will be funded if funds are available.

III. FUNDING AMOUNT AVAILABLE

Last year, EPA Region 10 was allocated $32,015,008 of the national GAP budget for tribes and tribal consortia in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Region 10 currently has 237 tribes and 21 tribal consortia with active GAP grants.

A. Base Funding Requests
In FY17, grantees may request a base level of funding between $75,000 and $128,000, depending on program need and ability to perform stated tasks. However, grantees are not guaranteed to be funded at their requested amount. EPA will not approve funding levels in this range for grantees with high balances of unexpended funds. Grantees with high balances are expected to request significantly lower levels of funding or no-cost extensions.

EPA will determine funding levels based on:
- the amount of GAP funding Region 10 receives;
- the number of tribes and tribal consortia submitting applications;
- the grantee's level of unexpended funds;
- whether proposed activities are eligible and meet the review factors (See Section VI); and
- past performance (See Section VII).

Tribes with large reservations may receive a higher level of base grant funding. For Umatilla, Spokane, and Quinault, base funding may be up to $155,000; for Coeur d'Alene, Nez Perce, Shoshone Bannock,

and Warm Springs, base funding may be up to $165,000; and for Colville and Yakama, base funding may be up to $175,000.

B. Solid Waste Funding Requests for Activities that will be Unallowable after FY17

Beginning in FY18, some solid waste implementation activities will no longer be funded through GAP; specifically, solid waste management utility services. EPA Region 10 will accept supplemental funding requests from tribes and consortia to support solid waste and recycling program services that will be unallowable for GAP funding in the near future. For a table of allowable and unallowable tribal solid waste activities under GAP, go to: http://www2.epa.gov/tribal/tables-allowable-and-unallowable-tribal-solid-waste-program-implementation-activities-under

The GAP Guidance states that the following activities will NOT be funded (starting in FY18): "General costs of government services normally provided to the general public, such as fire and police, are unallowable. Under GAP, this restriction includes trash collection, transportation, backhaul, and disposal services which are generally outside the scope of programs administered by the EPA." (GAP Guidance, page 7 of 22).

"Trash collection" means community pickup programs of discarded materials, including those that can be recycled. "Transportation" and "backhaul" refer to the process of shipping/carrying/moving discarded materials out of a community to a material processing center, such as a recycling center. Disposal services include operations and maintenance activities such as those listed in the following paragraph from EPA's Tables of Allowable & Unallowable Tribal Solid Waste Activities under GAP:

> "Operation and maintenance activities cannot be funded under GAP because they are not authorized under GAP or RCRA. Examples of prohibited costs include: salaries and wages for drivers, technicians, operators, or other workers responsible for conducting facility operations (trash/recycling collectors, separators, sanitation engineers, etc.); staffing costs for crushing cans, bailing paper, boxing light bulbs, securing/handling of household hazardous waste, sweeping/cleaning the facility, weighing materials, operating equipment, and driving trucks or other vehicles; and routine scheduled maintenance for vehicles and equipment."

Region 10 invites requests from tribes and consortia for additional funds to better address collection, transportation, backhaul, and disposal service needs, and recommends a maximum request of $30,000 per tribe. To qualify for this solid waste funding, tribes and/or consortia *must*:
- have an Integrated Waste Management Plan in place;
- have identified materials collection, transportation, backhaul, and disposal services as a priority;
- have included these activities in their FY17 work plans; and,
- be requesting additional funds to enhance this work.

If GAP funds are available after base grant needs have been met, Region 10 will fund supplemental requests from tribes and consortia supporting solid waste activities that will be unallowable for GAP funding beginning in FY18.

To apply for FY17 supplemental solid waste funding, include and identify extra work plan component(s) and budget category item(s) with your base funding request.

C. General GAP Grant Guidance

GAP grants must be closed out every four years, and tribes and tribal consortia may then apply for a new GAP grant for additional environmental program capacity building activities.

Two Year Work Plans: EPA strongly encourages current GAP recipients with an appropriate performance record of achieving outputs and outcomes to submit two-year proposals. An appropriate performance record is established by completing proposed activities as scheduled, submitting progress reports on time, fulfilling close-out requirements in a timely manner, regularly drawing funds down, and meeting all other grant requirements. If funding is available, two-year work plans may be fully funded. **A**

separate work plan and budget must be included for each year of funding requested. Please discuss this option with your EPA Project Officer before submitting a multi-year proposal.

Cost Sharing or Matching: Grantees are not required to provide matching funds for the GAP program.

IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Recipients for GAP grants

Federally-Recognized Tribes
All federally-recognized tribes in EPA Region 10 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington) are eligible to receive GAP funds.

Tribal Consortia
Funding for consortia will be considered after the needs of individual tribes are met. A tribal consortium is defined as a partnership between two or more tribes authorized by governing bodies of those tribes to apply for and receive assistance under the GAP program. A tribal consortium is eligible to receive grants if the consortium can adequately document compliance with each of the following requirements:

- A majority of member tribes are eligible to receive GAP grants.
- All member tribes that meet the eligibility requirements authorize the consortium to apply for and receive the grant.
- Only member tribes that meet eligibility requirements will directly benefit from the grant projects; the consortium must agree to that grant condition.
- **Documents of support such as tribal resolutions** or other written certification from a duly authorized representative of each tribal government must be provided for each new grant which clearly demonstrates that:
    - a partnership of tribal governments exists, and
    - all members that meet the eligibility requirements for a GAP grant authorize the Consortia to apply for and receive the grant.

Consortia must submit supporting resolutions or other documentation described above from all eligible tribal governments **by March 16, 2016.**

B. Allowable Activities
GAP provides funding for activities that build the capacity of tribal governments to plan, develop, and establish environmental protection programs consistent with the federal laws the EPA implements. Tribes must first establish core environmental protection program capacities as provided under Appendix 1 of the 2013 GAP Guidance http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-05/documents/gap-guidance-final.pdf.

A brief synopsis of allowable capacity-building and solid and hazardous waste management implementation activities is provided below.

1. Capacity-Building Activities
GAP funding may be used for activities that build tribal capacity to administer environmental protection programs consistent with the federal laws the EPA is charged with implementing. Capacity building may include developing the appropriate administrative and legal infrastructure, establishing tribal technical capability, and planning and establishing an integrated tribal environmental management program to be implemented by a tribe with technical and financial assistance from other EPA program-specific grants. A sample list of activities which are either allowable or restricted under GAP is provided in **Attachment C** of this announcement.

2. Program Capacity Building: Planning, Developing, Establishing and Implementing Tribal Waste Management Program Capacity

Tribal environmental departments develop waste management program capacity through a range of planning and development activities. For **recommendations on developing solid waste management capacity** under the 2013 GAP Guidance, please review **Attachment D** of this announcement.

EPA's tribal solid waste priority is the promotion of sustainable waste management programs. The EPA's GAP program does not fund general costs of government services, which is prohibited by federal regulations. The term "government services" includes fire and police, as well as other services normally provided by municipal governments, including trash collection, transportation, backhaul, and disposal services. Beginning in FY18, the GAP program will no longer cover costs associated with trash or recycling collection, or the costs associated with shipping recyclables or electronics wastes. During this transition time, Region 10 encourages Tribes to include work plan tasks that promote the development of a **self-sustaining** solid waste management program, and consider developing partnerships to increase cost effectiveness.

Region 10 encourages the development, revitalization, and implementation of Integrated Waste Management Plans (IWMPs). An IWMP, formerly known as a solid waste management plan, is a document that outlines how the tribe will reduce, manage, and dispose of its solid waste. The intent of a Plan is to assist and guide the development and implementation of a solid waste management program by establishing what actions need to be taken and by setting the criteria for decision-making. An effective integrated solid waste management system considers how to prevent, recycle, and manage solid waste in ways that most effectively protect human health and the environment. To learn more about IWMPs, visit:
http://www3.epa.gov/region9/waste/tribal/planning.html

Once a tribe has established appropriate solid and hazardous waste capacities (listed under section E.3. of the GAP Guidance, Appendix I), GAP funds may be used for the following implementation activities in order of priority:
> (1) Program administration;
> (2) Compliance and enforcement;
> (3) Solid waste management, resource recovery, and resource conservation support; and
> (4) Cleanup and closure.

See the GAP Guidance, Appendix I, Section E.3, for more information. Go to:
http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-05/documents/gap-guidance-final.pdf.

C. System for Award Management (SAM)

In order for EPA to process grant awards or make payments to grant recipients, the entity (tribe or consortium) must provide a valid Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and maintain an active SAM registration. SAM requirements apply to all federal funding. Maintenance of your tribe's information is typically a function of the tribal administration because it applies to all federally funded tribal programs.

SAM registration must be renewed annually. We recommend that you work with your organization's administration to renew your SAM registration every February to avoid a lapse in GAP funding. To register in SAM, or update an existing registration go to: https://www.sam.gov/

When submitting your grant application forms, tribes must use the name of the tribe as it appears on BIA's list of federally recognized tribes. To check the most current BIA list of federally recognized tribes (as of January 14, 2015) go to: http://www.bia.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/text/idc1-029079.pdf. If the Tribe's SAM registration name is not exactly the same as the legal name on BIA's list, we strongly recommend the tribe correct the SAM registration name as soon as possible.

V.   PROPOSAL PROCESS

Initial proposals, due **January 15, 2016**, must include:
- Draft work plans and detailed budgets
- Narrative discussion (only required the first year of a multi-year grant cycle)

Detailed information on the narrative, work plan, and budget requirements and on the negotiation process is provided below.

A. Narrative Discussion (required in first year of new grants; must be included as an attachment when submitting a proposal in GAP Online).
1. Summary of tribe's location, history, culture, membership and other related information (i.e. is it compacting or self-governance, audit schedule, description of other programs the tribe administers, number of employees, description of personnel and financial policies and procedures, and any history of administrative or financial issues).
2. Description of any high-priority environmental and human health issues that affect the tribe, and any related environmental assessment or strategy efforts conducted to date.
3. Description of tribal capacity building efforts needed to address environmental and human health risks and tribe's history with the GAP program (i.e. how many years tribe has received GAP grants, accomplishments/goals achieved, a description of any challenges or corrective actions).
4. An organizational chart or description that outlines where environmental staff are placed within the tribe's organizational structure.
5. List of other funding sources/amounts (both federal and non-federal) that the tribe has managed or plans to pursue to develop and implement environmental programs.

B. Work Plan
1. **General Work Plan Requirements.** Applicants must submit draft work plans in the standardized template, provided in **Attachment E**, or directly into GAP Online, which will prompt users to include the required elements in the needed format. To access GAP Online, visit: https://ofmext.epa.gov/GAP_Online.

   Work plans must not duplicate prior efforts; they should demonstrate clear progress and that capacity is being built over time or specify new focus areas (2013 GAP Guidance requirement). Duplicates of prior year work plans will be rejected by the EPA Project Officer and the grant application may be denied.

   For multi-year proposals, a separate work plan must be included for each year.

   Work plans must include the following elements (as reflected in the template in **Attachment E**):
   a. A description of each work plan component to be funded;
   b. Estimated work years (Full-Time Equivalent or FTE = 2,080 hours or one work year) and estimated funding amounts for each work plan component;
   c. Work plan commitments for each work plan component, and a timeframe for completion;
   d. A performance evaluation process and reporting schedule in accordance with 40 CFR § 35.515 (please include as an attachment in GAP Online);
   e. A description of tribal and EPA roles and responsibilities in carrying out the work plan commitment (please include as an attachment in GAP Online, and note that the performance evaluation process and roles and responsibilities descriptions may be included together as a single attachment);
   f. Expected outputs (or deliverables) for each commitment;
   g. Outcomes (environmental or public health results) associated with each work plan component to the extent practicable; and
   h. Identification of applicable Capacity Indicators for each work plan component (entered in the Measure field for each component in GAP Online).

Capacity Indicators are measures of progress a tribe is making in environmental program development. Under the 2013 GAP Guidance, EPA has identified many different Capacity Indicators for each environmental media or topic (such as air or water quality) that grantees may be seeking to establish. Applicants must assign at least one Capacity Indicator to each work plan component. Capacity Indicators should be listed by number (e.g. "C.3.1"), as outlined in Appendix I of the Guidance (http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-05/documents/gap-guidance-final.pdf).

Note that the indicators in Appendix I are a non-exclusive menu of choices. If an applicant wants to develop a capacity area not identified in Appendix I, please consult your Project Officer. Where capacities are being developed in areas not described in Appendix I, the work plan must adequately identify and describe the applicable indicators of capacity.

2. **Mandatory Tasks.** The following tasks are mandatory for all grantees.
    ✓ EPA-Tribal Environmental Plan (ETEP). The 2013 GAP Guidance requires each tribal government grantee to negotiate a joint EPA-Tribal Environmental Plan with EPA by FY18, and identifies requirements for the content of ETEPs. Tribes who have not yet included this task in a previous work plan must include the task in their FY17 or FY18 work plan. Once an ETEP is developed, GAP grant work plans should reflect the identified tribal priorities.

    ✓ Administrative/Fiscal Assessment. Tribes that do not conduct a single audit must review and assess the tribe's financial, procurement and property management procedures to ensure that the tribe's systems meet the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200. This assessment must be repeated whenever there are substantial changes to the tribe's financial systems **or at least every four years**. EPA Project Officers can provide grantees with a questionnaire to use as a guide for performing this administrative self-assessment. Addressing deficiencies in the tribe's administrative systems is an eligible activity under GAP.

3. **Success Stories/Lessons Learned.** Region 10 requires that all grantees submit a success story or a write-up describing lessons learned at least once during a four-year GAP grant cycle. The success story write-up must be included as a work plan task, and should be a one-page summary focused on a particular task, project or a highlight of work performed during the multi-year GAP grant.

    The success story should include:
    • before/after pictures, if appropriate
    • data (e.g. waste materials collected by weight, volume or category), if applicable
    • a description of how the tribe planned and accomplished the activities
    • a description of how the GAP funding affected behavior or led to a positive change in the environment or public health (as applicable)

    A sample work plan task and deliverable might be:
    Commitment: Develop a one-page summary of the hazardous material collection project.
    Deliverable: Summary page with pictures and data as appropriate.

    For more information on this requirement, contact your EPA Project Officer.

4. **Quality Assurance Documentation.** If your tribe plans to conduct any environmental measurements, including sampling and data compilation activities (i.e. baseline water quality), **and/or use of existing environmental data,** you must submit a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) to EPA. The QAPP must be approved by EPA before you can conduct any environmental measurements. Once approved by EPA, QAPP's are valid for 5 years unless there are changes that require earlier updates. Grantees must review QAPPs annually; grantees

must revise and submit QAPPs to EPA for re-approval *at least* every 5 years. Include commitments in your work plan to attend any necessary training, and to develop and submit the QAPP to your EPA Project Officer.

EPA requires grantees to demonstrate competency prior to conducting any activities that involve collecting, analyzing or using environmental measurement data. A term and condition will be included in any grants that involve collection of environmental data to ensure competency is addressed. You must work with your Project Officer to demonstrate organizational competency has been achieved through past grant performance or describe that needed training is planned or has been completed by the staff who will work on the project.

Tribes that have been granted jurisdictional authority to implement federal environmental laws on their tribal lands are required by regulation to submit a Quality Management Plan to EPA. For assistance in meeting this requirement, please contact your Project Officer.

C. **Detailed Budget (include as an attachment when submitting a proposal in GAP Online)**
A detailed budget must be submitted for each year in a multi-year work plan. EPA has developed a recommended budget template, which is provided in **Attachment F.**

Travel. All travel requests must be clearly supported by work plan tasks. To be allowable, travel costs must be consistent with the capacity being built, reasonable for the stated benefit, necessary to accomplish the work in a stated work plan component/commitment, and allocable (authorized and beneficial) to the grant.

Travel must be integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g., developing capacity). Applicants must provide the types/purposes of travel, estimated number of trips, planned destinations and estimated number of travelers in the detailed budget. Expenditure of travel funds should be as stated in the approved work plan and budget; any changes in travel needs after the grant is awarded can be requested by an email to your project officer. Any Tribal Council travel under the GAP grant must be pre-approved by EPA and justified in the budget.

Indirect Cost Rate. Applicants who want to include indirect costs as part of a proposed budget must submit a copy of the organization's current, approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement to the EPA Region 10 Grants and Interagency Agreement Unit. If you do not have a negotiated agreement, you must provide written proof that you have submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to your cognizant agency. For applicants who don't have a current approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, or who haven't submitted a proposal for one, EPA has established other options for including indirect costs in the proposed budget. Please see **Attachment G** for details.

Equipment Purchases. Equipment is defined by EPA as tangible, non-expendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit, although a lower dollar amount threshold can be established by the applicant. Any proposed equipment costs must be eligible, allocable and allowable under GAP. Purchase of equipment for the purpose of conducting construction activities is not allowable. Purchase of equipment for resource recovery, resource conservation and source separation is allowable if the applicant has established program capacities under Section E.3 of the GAP Guidance, Appendix I, and if the first two areas of program implementation in Appendix I, Section E.4, are in place. **ALL equipment purchases require prior approval of the EPA Project Officer and the EPA Grants and Interagency Agreement Unit.**

Applicants requesting equipment must address the following requirements:
- List of each equipment item
- Estimated cost of each item
- Justification of need for each item (how item will help accomplish work plan tasks)
- Lease versus purchase analysis

- Indication of the method of procurement to be followed (e.g., micro purchase, small purchase, sealed bid, competitive or sole source)
- Price and cost analysis
- Requested disposition of the equipment and justification

D. Submitting Your Draft Proposal
Please submit your draft work plans and budgets in GAP Online or directly to your EPA Project Officer. If you are applying for the first year of a multi-year grant, you must also submit a Narrative Discussion as part of your draft proposal.

If you are a new applicant, please mail or email your proposal to:
Sally Thomas
US EPA, Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue, ETPA-202-6
Seattle, WA 98101-1128
thomas.sally@epa.gov

If you have any questions about the GAP application process or grant requirements, please contact an EPA Project Officer. General questions can be directed to the Tribal Trust and Assistance Unit in Region 10 at 1-800-424-4372.

E. Work Plan/Budget Negotiation
Your EPA Project Officer will contact you to negotiate revisions to your work plans and budgets and arrange a time frame for revisions. You are responsible for completing the negotiation process and responding to revision requests within the time frames specified by your EPA Project Officer.

Applicants who are not responsive to revision requests or who do not make requested revisions after three documented requests will not be awarded a GAP grant. Applicants in this situation will be encouraged to seek the needed training and apply during the next GAP funding cycle. Submitting an initial proposal does not guarantee that a grant will be awarded.

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA

GAP applications will be reviewed to determine:
1. *The extent to which the proposed activities in the work plan support the purpose of the GAP.* Activities should focus on development of tribal environmental protection program capacities, consistent with EPA statutory programs.
2. *The feasibility and likely effectiveness of the proposed activities.* Work plans must include well-defined, achievable commitments, outputs and outcomes (environmental results) and Capacity Indicators associated with each work plan component. While EPA recognizes that some activities are ongoing, proposed work plans must not be duplicative (i.e., identical to previous year except for date changes); they must demonstrate clear progress from one year to the next.
3. *The extent to which the budget, resources, and requested funds for key personnel are reasonable and sufficient to accomplish the proposed project.* Proposed work plan costs must be necessary, allowable, allocable, reasonable, and sufficient to accomplish the proposed project.
4. *The degree to which the work plan identifies the expected environmental results of the proposed project.* Work plans must identify expected improvements to environmental and/or human health conditions.
5. *The degree to which the proposed activities in the work plan support achieving the long-term goals identified in the EPA-Tribal Environmental Plans.*
6. *Prior performance.* EPA will consider past grant funding and performance in determining whether an applicant will receive funding and how much funding will be awarded.

Additionally, proposals must include all information requested in this funding announcement.

VII.   PAST PERFORMANCE

Past performance is an important factor in EPA funding decisions. All applicants must demonstrate sound financial, administrative, and programmatic grant management capability. For current or previous recipients, the EPA Project Officer will verify:

- Timeliness and completeness of performance reports and close out of the previous grant.
- Whether there is sufficient progress under the current work plan and if not, whether corrective actions are in place.
- No duplicative activities in the proposed work plan and budget when compared to earlier awards.
- The amount of unexpended funds, frequency of drawdowns and fiscal accountability. Grantees with large balances of unspent funds and no reasonable plan to spend the funds by the end of the budget period will receive reduced awards or no additional funding.

For recipients with documented performance issues, the proposal must include a discussion of the steps the applicant has taken to address issues and correct past challenges. Applicants who are out of compliance with the regulatory, programmatic or administrative terms and conditions of their existing award may be denied funding, receive a reduced award, and/or be designated as a 'high risk' grantee.

If the applicant has not applied for GAP funding in the past, or if past performance merits a review of the applicant's administrative or financial grants management systems, a pre-award review will be required prior to submission of an application. EPA will contact the applicant to schedule this review if necessary.

Extensions
EPA will work with grantees with a high balance of unspent GAP funding from previous years (and no reasonable plan for spending the funds) to request a no-cost extension or reduced award. A no-cost extension allows the grantee to continue working on a project for up to a year with remaining funds from prior years. Extensions are not an option if the grantee is in the last year of a four-year grant.

New funds require new work commitments; a no-cost extension allows time for a grantee to successfully complete those previously approved work plans. No-cost extensions do not limit the amount of funds that may be requested in the future, nor do they reflect poorly upon a grantee's future chances of receiving full funding.

<u>Extensions are not automatic and must be requested by the applicant.</u>

To request a no-cost extension, your Tribal Council or authorized representative **MUST** submit the request in writing to your Project Officer. EPA prefers to receive extension request letters at least one month BEFORE the end of the grant period.

Extension request letters should include:
- the length of time for the extension (up to 1 year);
- why the extension is needed (reasons for project delay);
- how the project will be completed; and,
- revised completion dates for the project.

VIII.   FUNDING PRIORITIES

Based upon Region 10's GAP budget allocation, we will prioritize funding applicants in the following order:

1. **Individual Tribes.** The primary purpose of GAP grants is to build tribal capacity for developing and administering environmental protection programs. Therefore, providing GAP grants to individual tribal governments is our highest priority.

2. **Tribal Consortia.** Funding for tribal consortia will be considered after the base needs of individual tribes are met. Consortia work plans must meet the needs of member tribes without duplicating individual tribal efforts. Work plans must support development of tribal environmental capacity.

IX.   PERFORMANCE PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

Performance Partnership Grants (PPGs) are grants formed by incorporating at least two eligible EPA grants into a single grant agreement. PPGs help decrease administrative burdens and increase flexibility in how grant funds can be used. Tribes that receive two or more PPG-eligible EPA grants are encouraged to discuss the prospect of forming a PPG with their EPA Project Officer. For a current list of the EPA programs eligible to be included in a PPG, please refer to 40 CFR § 35.501.

Tribes should engage the EPA in PPG discussions **before** developing individual grant applications. Past grant performance is one factor EPA considers when evaluating potential PPGs. Since multiple grants are involved, PPG proposals and applications may take longer to develop than single grant proposals. PPG deadlines may vary depending on the type of grants involved; however, tribes should strive to complete final applications no later than May 20, 2016.

X.   FULL APPLICATION SUBMITTAL PROCESS

A. Notification of Funding Decision
After EPA and grantees complete negotiations of GAP work plans and budgets, Project Officers will notify applicants to submit a full application package. Letters/emails will include the following guidance:
- The amount of tentatively approved funding;
- Any final requests for revisions; and
- The due date by which the revised application package must be submitted in Grants.gov.

B. Submitting Your Full Application Package in Grants.gov
All application packages must be submitted through Grants.gov **by the date negotiated with your Project Officer** (sometime between March and mid-May). Grants.gov allows applicants to download application packages and work offline. To download the application, go to:
http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/download-application-package.html.

Detailed Grants.gov application instructions are included in Attachment A.

Your full GAP (or PPG) application package submitted in Grants.gov must include:
- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Final work plans
- Key Contacts form
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- Budget Narrative
- Current approved Indirect Cost Rate agreement or proposed rate (whichever is most recent)

The following additional documents are required in Grants.gov the first year of a GAP grant *only*:
- Narrative Discussion (for more details, see section V.A. of this Announcement)
- Lobbying Form (6600-06)
- Assurances for Non-Construction form (SF-424B)
- Pre-award Compliance Review (EPA Form 4700-4)

Tribal consortia must also submit signed authorizations from member tribes to EPA by March 16, 2016. See Section IV.A for details.

If you have *any* technical questions or issues, call or email the Grants.gov customer service center. Your Project Officer will not be able to assist you with technical questions. The service center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and can be reached at 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov.

Exception Requests. If your tribe or organization has no access to internet or access is very limited due to weather or other circumstances, you may request an exception from submitting your application in Grants.gov. Your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods. See **Attachment H** for details.

Late proposals will not be accepted.

Grant awards will generally be made by September 30, 2016.

C. GAP Online
By September 30, 2016, all GAP recipients (except tribes with PPGs) must enter final revised work plans and budget attachments into GAP Online at: https://ofmext.epa.gov/GAP_Online.

For those new to the GAP program or to GAP Online, please contact an EPA Project Officer for information, or access the GAP Online User Guide at: http://www2.epa.gov/tribal/user-guides-indian-general-assistance-program-gap-online. The GAP Online system provides a centralized tool for developing and electronically storing work plans and progress reports. User names and passwords have been distributed to tribes. If you do not have your user name and password, or if you have trouble entering data into GAP Online, please contact an EPA Project Officer.

XI.   AWARD ADMINISTRATION / RESOURCES

A. Applicable Agency Guidance, Regulations, and OMB Circulars
GAP awards are subject to the following:
- EPA Indian Environmental General Assistance Program 2013 Guidance, http://www2.epa.gov/tribal/guidance-award-and-management-general-assistance-agreements-tribes-and-intertribal-consortia
- 2 CFR Part 200 "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
- 40 CFR Part 35, Subpart B "Environmental Program Grants for Tribes"

Grantees must also comply with the administrative and programmatic terms and conditions of the grant award. Grant applicants should carefully review and understand all grant award documents prior to accepting the grant since the agreement is legally binding. If questions or concerns arise during that review, contact your EPA Project Officer.

B. Confidentiality
Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential. EPA will make confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency regulations found at 40 CFR Part 2, Subpart B.

XII.   LIST OF ATTACHMENTS
A. Grants.gov Instructions
B. Proposal Review Checklist
C. Sample Listing of Eligible and Ineligible GAP Activities
D. Building a Self-Sustaining Tribal Solid Waste Program
E. Proposal Narrative and Work Plan Template
F. Budget Template
G. Indirect Cost Rate Information for Tribal Governments
H. Grants.gov Exception Request